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Europe's Waters today

Assessment of Member States` 2nd River Basin Management Plans Update from the European Commission

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Reporting under the Water Framework Directive

Article 15

- Member States to report River Basin Management Plans
- All reported albeit with some significant delays and reporting still incomplete

Article 18

- Commission report to the European Parliament and Council (legal deadline 22 December 2018)
- Report also on international Basins and 1st Flood Risk Management Plans (Article 7 Floods Directive)

Article 18.5

- Water conferences

What is the Commission looking at?



Comprehensive picture presented in previous implementation reports



Focus of current assessment of RBMPs: progress since first cycle and follow-up to Commission recommendations



Basis for analysis: information reported by Member States; a number of other sources serve as complementary information

Main areas: governance; monitoring, assessment and classification of status; designation of Highly Modified Water Bodies; environmental objectives and exemptions; diffuse pollution; economic analysis; droughts etc.



Preliminary Findings – by main topics

Governance:

broad participation and active involvement of stakeholders mostly ensured

Knowledge of causes:

much better knowledge of current status, main reasons for failure to achieve good status, interaction between pressures and needed measures. However, justification for excluding some pressures should be improved and drivers behind some hydromorphological alterations still need to be better understood

Monitoring:

Monitoring networks and their coverage have been revised. However, still some gaps, including on monitoring frequency. Measurement of Priority Substances very diverse across the EU

Preliminary Findings – by main topics

Status assessment:

progress on methods and confidence level; further efforts needed for coastal and transitional waters and to translate results of intercalibration exercise into national methods. Some improvement also on methodology to establish Good Ecological Potential.

Exemptions:

some improvement in justifications but still too often applied. More Article 4(7) exemptions for new physical modifications for new infrastructure projects, more projects in pipeline, and more exemptions may be applied in future.

Programmes of Measures:

progress made with implementation of first programme, although a lack of finance is a significant obstacle; most Member States improved identification of gap to good status for each significant pressure and required level of implementation of measures.

Impacts from Agriculture:

basic measures mostly in place but in half the cases, recommended gap assessment not carried out

Pressures other than agriculture:

measures generally in place, including substance-specific but more progress needed

Preliminary Findings – by main topics



Hydromorphology

- measures in place and link with economic sectors better understood;
- more progress needed on defining and implementing minimum ecological flows



Economic analysis

- limited number of Member States upgraded water pricing policies;
- significant gaps remain in translating analysis into concrete measures



Protected areas

- Additional efforts still required to ensure appropriate protection and management (drinking water, nature, shellfish production areas, bathing waters, etc.).



Droughts

- Considered relevant in about half of Member States; not all relevant basins have Drought Management Plans

Preliminary Findings – overall

Substantial improvements in levels of knowledge and reporting more comprehensive and reliable.

Compliance with WFD objectives increasing gradually. Groundwater bodies largely in good status but surface water bodies lagging behind, even if individual quality elements have improved in many cases.



Improved implementation of related legislation has had a positive effect on water status, in particular of the Urban Waste Water Treatment, the Nitrates, and Industrial Emissions Directives and EU law related to chemicals

However, significant effort still to be made to overcome the remaining challenges by the end of the third cycle (i.e. by 2027). Implementation urgently needs to accelerate

Preliminary Findings – Flood Risk Management Plans

Member States made good efforts in preparation of 1st FRMPs with solid results

Nevertheless, several challenges remain, which will need to be tackled during the preparation of the 2nd FRMPs

Areas requiring further attention in many FRMPs include for example:

- making objectives more specific or measurable;
- establishing clear links between objectives and measures to achieve them;
- more complete cost estimates and methods of prioritisation of measures;
- further developed links with climate change adaptation strategies

Next steps

EEA State of Water 2018 Report and forthcoming Commission report together provide most comprehensive and reliable picture to date

On this basis, Commission will continue to work with Member States (collectively and bilaterally) and stakeholders to promote compliance

Commission will also continue enforcement action where warranted

Next work programme of the Common Implementation Strategy (2019-2021)

Fitness Check of EU Water Law (2019)



**Thank you for
your attention**